1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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higher class; these were built by the Kahlons, or ministers of the former sovereigns, and now for the most part belong to their representatives. 361

Outside the city[1] are several gardens, or what are here so called; in truth they are plantations of willow and of poplar. These plantations are extremely useful, both for their grateful [313] shade—which is the first thing a traveller will look for in these parts in summer time—and as a reserve of building-timber, a thing in Ladākh extremely scarce. On the east of the town [311] the mountains are near and there is no cultivation; but to the west, the whole width of the valley, about three-quarters of a mile, is of cultivated land, descending in terraces, with small hamlets scattered over it.

[1] [i.e. Leh - Ed.]

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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482 147 With such food and drink as has been described the Ladākhīs are one of the hardiest of races. As coolis, for carrying loads, they are admirable—not only the men but the women too. I have had women employed to carry my baggage, according to the custom of the country, who have done twenty-three or twenty-four miles with sixty pounds on their back, and have come in at the end singing cheerfully. Against cold, too, they are very strong. Not that they equal in this respect the Chāmpās, who live at still greater heights, and can hardly bear to be as low down as 11,000 feet. Still the people of Central Ladākh and of Zānskār are very hardy in this respect also; on a frosty night, with nothing but the clothes they go in, they will coil themselves up and sleep 513 comfortably on the bare stony ground. All have a 515 rooted objection to washing. I was told that there was a custom of bathing once a year, but I could never get any satisfactory corroboration of the report. Their clothes, worn next them, are never washed, but are affectionately kept around them until they fall to pieces.

372 Of the wants rife in a barren country like Ladākh, there are two which (perhaps without, or at all events in addition to, other difficulties) seem to make impossible either any great addition to the population or increase of their comforts. These are want of fuel and want of timber. For fuel the dung of cattle is carefully stored. This is supplemented in some parts by a bush which they pull from the hills that they call *burtse* (Eurotia). This plant is indeed a great resource for travellers in out-of-the-way parts; it is a small low-growing bush, the woody underground stem of which makes a good fuel. Then, in the high valleys, there is a plant like our furze, called *dāma*. On some hill-sides there is the pencil-cedar, a strong-burning wood; and lastly, in certain ravines, there is willow growing wild. All these, however, from their distance, require much labour to collect; they are seldom used by the Ladākhīs in their own houses, but are chiefly got by them for travellers and for the ● 313 town consumption. The timber-trees are willow and poplar. These are planted either along the watercourses between

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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the fields, or now and then in separate plantations. But the growth is not enough to supply all that is wanted. When the new bazaar at Leh was built, a great old plantation belonging to the chief monastery was felled for the purpose, nothing approaching to which is now to be seen in the country. The difficulty in the way of plantations seems to be that there is required for them positions advantageous in point of soil and water which are already occupied by crops; one can hardly increase the growth of timber without diminishing the breadth of land tilled, and of that there is none too much. 313

The houses are built of sun-dried bricks or of stone. They are flat-roofed, of two or three stories, but these all very low. Except in the very poorest houses there is always a reception room kept neat and clean, the rest not having this character. When a visitor comes they carpet this room with felts, and do all they can to make him and his attendants comfortable. The houses are all whitewashed, the aspect of them—perhaps among groups of trees, or else standing out in relief from the sombre rock on which they may be built, rising one behind the other on the face of it—with their verandah-rooms or with balconies projecting, is often bright and pleasant. The houses of people of the higher ranks have an oratory for the practice of the Buddhist religious ceremonies. The palace at Leh is probably the finest building in the country, though some of the monasteries may approach it. This palace is curiously contrived. The arrangement of the rooms is very irregular; they are not in continuous stories, but are at all sorts of levels, connected by narrow and low passages. There are two or three large reception rooms, some of them with an opening to the sky in the centre, this plan allowing of a large fire burning in winter on the floor of the room. The roofs of these large rooms were supported by columns with the wide-extending head or capital which is so marked a feature in Indian architecture; the columns, and indeed most of the wood-work, were gaily coloured, and on the walls were painted sacred pictures. 342 [576] 344 [341] [353]

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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face of the mound. The place is dilapidated; ruin and decay are shown both in the substance of the hill—the waste of mountains—and in the human habitations that were built on it. Such instances of moraines could be multiplied. Not far from Padam is a conspicuous group of very large erratic blocks. Just south-west of Thonde, nine miles from Padam, where the valley is about a mile and a half wide, there stretches right across it—except for the channel that the river flows in—an irregular moundy tract of stones and sand. This is clearly a moraine; its width, measured in the direction of the run of the valley, is half a mile; it contains pieces of gneiss, which must have come from the mountains south-west of Padam.

The climate of Zānskār is severe. The spring, summer, and autumn together last little more than five months, after which snow falls, and at once winter closes in, confining the people and the cattle within doors for the space of half the year. A much greater depth of snow falls here than in Central Ladākh. In the spring it causes avalanches from the mountains to such an extent that in the Nunak Valley the people cannot till a month has passed get about from village to village for fear of them. To clear the snow from the fields in time for the sowing requires special contrivance. During summer and autumn the people collect earth and store it in their houses in considerable quantities. In the spring, when they deem the time of snow-fall to be over, and the snow in the fields is partly melted and has begun to cake with the sun's rays, they spread the earth, which absorbs warmth from the sun, and melts the snow in contact with it. Sometimes snow falls afresh, and the labour is lost and has to be repeated. In 1869 there were three or four layers of earth and snow thus accumulated before the work was done. The villages of Zānskār are not so comfortable nor so picturesque in look as those we have seen in other parts of Ladākh. Trees are extremely rare; the continuance of snow and the force of the wind are much against their growth; there are a few plantations of poplars grown for the sake of timber, and lately the authorities have increased their number, but the trees produce nothing more than slender poles.

3: Imperial Gazetteer G-3 (1889-95) 1909 AV1 Kashmir
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check on the latter was the widespread authority of the monasteries. The chief of these is Himis Gompa, on the left bank of the Indus, 18 miles above Leh. This monastery, which contains 400 to 800 monks and nuns, stands at the head of a wild glen and covers a considerable space of ground. An important festival, called the Himis Tsheshū, is held annually on the tenth day of the fifth month (about June 7), when the whole country-side flock to the monastery and witness the weird devil-dance of the Buddhist Lāmas. A constant spectator is the Gialpo of Ladākh. The monastery is believed to contain great wealth, and the treasure is kept under guard in order to prevent its being carried over the border to Lhāsa. The chief shrine is faced entirely with silver plate. Its treasure-house has small vases filled with pearls, turquoises, and rubies, said to be of value.

Leh (population, 2,079) is the only place of importance in Ladākh, and there are besides 463 villages. With the exception of one village of Shiah Musalmāns in Chhachkot, and of the Arguns or half-breeds, practically the whole population, excluding the town of Leh, is Buddhist. The people style themselves Bhots. According to the last Census, there are now 30,216 Buddhists living in Ladākh. They have the Mongolian cast of features, and are strong and well made, ugly, but cheerful and good-tempered. If they do quarrel over their barley beer (*chang*), no bad blood remains afterwards. They are very truthful and honest, and it is said that in court the accused or defendant will almost invariably admit his guilt or acknowledge the justice of the claim.

The people.

There are five main castes (*riks*): the Rgrial *riks*, or ryot caste; the Trangzey *riks*, or priestly caste; the Rjey *riks*, or high officials; the Hmang *riks*, or lower officials and agricultural classes; and the Tolbay *riks*, or artificers and musicians. This last caste, also known as Bem, is considered inferior.

The Ladākhis may be divided into the Champas or nomads, who follow pastoral pursuits on the upland valleys, too high for cultivation; and the Ladākhis proper, who have settled in the valley and the side valleys of the Indus, cultivating with great care every patch of cultivable ground. These two classes do not, as a rule, intermarry, and Champas rarely furnish recruits to the monasteries. The Ladākhis are mostly engaged in agriculture, and in spite of the smallness of their holdings they are fairly prosperous. Their great wants are fuel and timber. For fuel they use cow-dung and the bush known as *burtse*. Their only timber trees are the scattered and scanty willows and poplars which grow along the watercourses.